1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

LEGAL ACTIONS IN ADULTERY AND WIFE-STEALING

CONFLICTS IN MARITAL LAW AND SOCIAL CUSTOM

Though it was illegal for a Comanche wife to desert her husband, to do so was a well established Comanche custom. More than that, custom provided for effective group cooperation in extension of aid to the would-be deserting wife and her absconder. Custom and law worked at cross-purposes. The cause lay in the clash of two opposing fundamental interests which could not be integrated. The result was such "lawless" behavior as Mr. Jerome Frank describes as arising from the "pretend rules" which are so common in human societies, rules which give expression in law to principles mouthed but not wholly believed in.[1]

Before the law Comanche woman was a quasi-chattel; her man was her *baron*. Under the system of contract marriage which prevailed, a girl was bestowed upon a man ofttimes many years her senior and not of her own choosing. According to the ideal pattern she adjusted herself to the arrangement, settling into a smooth and dutiful marital career. It is the expressed belief of the older Indians that such marriages were more successful and lasting than those which were formed of romantic liaison. Unfortunately, one cannot determine the relative percentages of successful marriages for the Comanche. The Comanche law system buttressed this marital arrangement by providing institutionalized instruments for the collection of restituitive damages by any husband whose sexual claim upon his wife was infringed upon by an adulterer or wife-absconder. The husband could mete extreme punishment upon the unfaithful and hapless wife. A marriage had the full protection of the law.

The basic belief that a man's rights in marriage were exclusive (except for the privileges extended to a brother under the anticipatory levirate) and not to be impinged upon unless he had released these rights through recognized divorce, ran into counter currents of custom in the existing notions of romantic marriage (wherein younger couples sought love-mates of their own choosing) and the prevailing behavior of males in the competitive struggle for personal ranking and the attainment of bravery status. The competition for bravery ranking which was institutionalized in coup counting found its opportunity for expression *within* the tribe in the taking of women from their husbands. This threw the wife-taker and the husband into direct conflict. Not raw conflict, however, for as shall be seen, mechanisms for settling the issue without fighting had been developed.

[1] Jerome Frank, *Lawlessness* (Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, vol. 10, 1937), p. 227.

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inside the kin group was the business of nobody outside the group; and that inside the group, the way of handling a situation depended largely on personality and temperament.

PRIVILEGED HOMICIDE

One type of killing which was not murder was the privilege of the husband to kill his wife. This is a variant of the purely in-group character of in-group friction. For this there was no retaliation. It was the acknowledged right of the man, and no one would lift a finger to legal action. Not only was the position of woman largely that of chattel, but the chattel passed from the original family to the husband. In return the obligation to provide food for the father-in-law lay on the husband. Escape for the woman lay in absconding,[1] but the number of instances in which the run-away wife was slain or mutilated by the husband is notable. In the twenty-two cases of wife-absconding collected from the Comanches the woman disputed was killed by her husband in four. Three adulterous wives were killed by their husbands in twenty-three instances of discovered transgression. Thus in forty-five Comanche cases of marital infidelity, seven women were slain at the hands of the husband or his henchmen. This is one in six.

Though the sample is admittedly too small to be *statistically* significant, and is possibly biased through selection on the part of informants, it is not without significance that eighteen percent of the adulterous wives were killed. That the statistical proportion cannot be greatly in error is buttressed in the wry observation of Rhoda Bluefoot that the wives of her father and his brothers never ran away; they were afraid of what would happen, because their men were well known as fierce fighters.

That the kinship group showed no inclination to retaliate when a husband killed his wife—their blood relative—can mean nothing else than a true relinquishing of the kinship bond upon marriage in favor of a supreme marital bond. That a father had to beg his son-in-law not to harm his daughter who had erred, and even offered gifts that her husband would not harm her (see pages 101–102) proves this.

The fact of potential marriage through sororate rights did not, however, establish the legal right of a brother-in-law to kill his wife's sister. She was not yet his wife; therefore, not his for disposal—not even when the woman was *also* the wife of the slayer's brother, giving thereby additional *expectant* rights through the levirate. The Comanche captive, Lost, met his death for killing the sister of his wife, who according to She Invites Her Relatives, was at the same time the wife of his brother.

[1] Women informants used by Dr. Mirsky held that household sabotage was the easiest way out. A woman could shirk her duty until her husband threw her out in disgust.

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pressure on her, she owned up that the bead belonged to Touch A Person With A Closed Fist. When these words escaped her mouth, the friend, Little Medicine, shot her dead. Yellow Bear turned away with his friend, and they walked off leaving the dead woman to be sought after by her mother. Later they went over to Touch A Person With A Closed Fist and got the three horses from him.

Such techniques of procuriug evidence, so effective with women, could not be applied to men. Procedure had to rest on the evidence forthcoming from the woman's confession or upon definite knowledge possessed by the husband. When the defendant denied complicity in sexual transgression there could be no suit. Acceptance of guilt by the accused was a necessary basis to legal action. In only one instance were we able to get an example of denial maintained.

Case 29. Adultery: Defendant Denies Guilt and Is Shamed
Informant: Slope

"Early one evening a young man came to see a married woman. Unfortunately for them, the woman's husband came home early and saw the two near the tent. Startled, the young man ran off before the husband recognized him. But the husband questioned his wife to discover the boy's name. She told him who it was: a young fellow still living with his father. Her husband decided to go over the next morning to demand damages. When day came, the husband left for the boy's home. There he found that the offender was still in bed, so he called to his father saying, 'I want to see you. I've come to collect damages.'

"The father answered, 'Who's it on?'

"'That boy of yours.'

"By this time the culprit had appeared, and they all sat down to talk the matter over. The husband asked the young man to sit next to him, and calling him 'brother,' declared that he didn't want much. Four horses would satisfy him.

"At this the boy spoke up. 'Who are these four horses on?'

"'You.'

"The youth acted surprised. 'Why you must be mistaken,' he said. Then his father asked him whether it was true or not that he had wronged this man, and the boy denied it flatly.

"This denial enraged the husband. He pulled his knife and slashed off one of the young man's long braids of hair. Throwing it at his feet he cried, 'I was not going to do this, but if you insist on lying like a coyote, I'll sure make you look funny!. The boy and his father sat silent while the husband continued, 'That's all I'll do. I won't take any horses—but you sure do look funny.' And with that he stalked out."

This was a grievous insult—doubly so. To be minus a braid of hair made one conspicuous. Everyone would ask what had happened. To be compared

1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

to Coyote was to be held up alongside of that sly, ridiculous, untrustworthy mountebank who is the *Til Eulenspiegel* of Comanche mythology. The boy took it hard, too. He sulked in his lodge, ashamed to go out and face his friends. He thought his chance to save his face had come when an alarm of the approach of white military ran through the camp. He prepared to die gloriously, but was doomed to disappointment when the whites held out the olive branch.

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CONDITIONAL CURSE

The rough-and-ready third degree techniques fit well into the Comanche picture of war-like life. But beyond these forms there were other means at hand for the husband who chose to use them. These were ritualistic approaches to the supernatural which entered when called upon as a legal force. The supernatural was invoked through conditional curse and oath.

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The use of the conditional curse for proof was very specialized, indeed confined seemingly to adultery and sorcery cases. It was known as "sun-killing" taβéβekʌt. In adultery procedure the husband took his wife to a lonely spot and making smoke with his pipe, he addressed the charge to the sun and the earth and sometimes the moon. By these same powers the wife swore her innocence. These powers in their omnipotence knew the truth, and if the wife were guilty, they afflicted her with consumption. The usual fate of erring women who took the curse was, according to native dogma, that of Short Dress, wife of Kóhi. She denied her husband's charge, placing her hands flat upon the earth and calling upon the powers, while her husband smoked. She bade the sun, "May I die when the geese fly from the south to the north if I have done the thing he has charged me with."[3] She died the next spring.

In adultery, as in sorcery, the supernatural played the double role of judge and executor. The case was rested by the prosecutor and there was no more for him to do but await results.

More recent developments put another angle on the conditional curse. As Comanche women began to feel the emancipating effects of the impact of white contact, they refused to submit docilely to the curse. It was very unsettling to the men, but even so, That's It laughed as he thought of the startled discomfiture of the first husband to feel its effects. This man had accused his wife of adultery and did not believe her denial, so he prepared a smoke to the sun. And just as he was about to pronounce the fatal words, his wife broke in.

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"You are going to make smoke. You want to kill me," she expostulated.

[3] Some Comanches evaded repeating this oath to us for fear of its dangerous implications.

1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

627 "But you listen, I deny this thing. Now look out! I am going to smoke too.
177 If you are putting the lie on me, the sun will get you instead." That put a
562 different complexion on the situation; the husband was not begging for such a bargain. "So," as That's It put it, "he called off his sun-killing and gave his wife sugar-words."

Later another husband called the deal and paid the price. A man named Brother-in-law, according to Holding Her Sunshade, tried his wife on false evidence. When he put her to the curse, she made her denial and ended by calling to the supernaturals, "If he cuts off my nose, grant that he shall not live long." Brother-in-law accepted the challenge. He did cut off her nose, and within a month he was dead.

627 In earlier days when such notions had not yet occurred to women, there
688 were, nevertheless, other escapes, if the aid of a powerful practitioner could be enlisted. For in the case of Looking For Fun, we have one fortunate woman who was able to dodge death through the invocation of strong counterpowers.

Case 30. Adultery, Conditional Curse: Looking For Fun
Informant: That's It

"Her husband suspected her of adultery. This Looking For Fun denied. So her husband made sun-killing. Smoking to the powers, he first addressed the sun saying, 'You, Father, know the truth of this matter. As you look down on them don't let them live till fall.'[9] Then to the earth he said, 'You, Mother Earth, as you know what is true, don't let them live a happy life on you.' Whereupon he gave the pipe to his wife that she might make her self-curse.

Even though she was guilty and knew it, she swore to the powers, 'Sun, if you don't believe me, then let me perish. Mother Earth, if you don't believe me, let it be true that I won't live right upon you! Whatever he says, let it be true!'

"That ended the ceremony.

"After a few months Looking For Fun had fainting spells and began to waste away. She was frightened and went to a medicine man for help. He told her to wait to see what his powers offered. After three or four days he came to her and said he believed that the husband's charge was true! The great powers were punishing her. At this she owned up. She told the medicine man she had not confessed because she was afraid of what her husband would do to her. As for the curse, she said she didn't believe in its power and so had lied about it. The medicine man told her that that being the situation, it was too dangerous a matter for him to handle. His power was not strong enough to cope with the sun. He recommended that she take her case to another medicine man who was a specialist in such matters. Looking For Fun was eager and asked her adviser to tell her mother of the situation. The medicine man

[9] Compare this wording with the Crow Indian conditional curse in coup-counting disputes—"It was I struck the enemy. Sun, as you looked down, you saw me. May the one who lies die before winter." R. H. Lowie, *The Crow Indians* (New York, 1937), p. 217.

1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

627 754 684 522 "When he came home after the smoking was done, he found two people in the bed. One was his wife, and the other a young brave. The brave asked the pardon of the medicine man. What could he do? He was in the uncomfortable circumstances of being unable to separate from his paramour. He wildly offered the husband anything that might be required for his release.

"The husband turned on his heel and went outside. He got a switch. With this in his hand he entered the tipi again and gave the lovers a thorough dusting. After a while he wanted to go to bed. But the pair was still lying there, unable to get loose. So, calling on another of his wives, the medicine man ordered her to help him drag the luckless lovers outside the tipi. He pulling on the man, the wife upon the woman, they dumped the couple on the ground and left them.

"When morning came the parents of the young brave were about to move camp and became concerned with their boy's absence. Scouring through the camp to find him, they came upon their youth—attached still to the woman just as the irate husband had left them. Seeing this, the boy's father went to the medicine man and begged him to set the youth free.

"The husband refused. He said he loved his wife and he wanted her to get enough of it.

"Finding his own entreaties of no avail, the father went to some warriors of great influence and begged them to intercede. They went to the medicine man and offered him anything he might want to withdraw the charm. After this representation the medicine man consented; he went into the tipi and pulled the arrow out from under the bed. With this the pair got loose from each other.

"The father of the youth paid heavy damages to the medicine man, and that settled that part of the case.

"Then the father of the guilty wife came to plead for his daughter, that she wouldn't get cut up or killed by her husband. He offered his son-in-law gifts and [558] begged him not to hurt his child. He suggested that since she was guilty, it would be well to make her the slave of the other two wives, but he would not like to see her injured. The medicine man refused the gift from his father-in-law, but agreed to keep the woman, though she could no longer be his favorite wife. Thereafter she had to be a slave in his household to her younger sisters."

606 581 562 Here is a father begging his son-in-law not to harm his daughter. Propitiatory gifts are offered! As was noted in the discussion of murder, the title to a woman passed completely to the husband on marriage. That he refused the gift and yet observed the father's wish seems merely to indicate the nobility of the husband in the case.

ORDEAL

627 Conditional curse is closely akin to ordeal. In view of the wide spread of ordeal in the Old World and its peculiar usefulness in law, its general neglect by the American Indians is unique. Yet neglect need not mean

1: Hoebel E-5 (1933) 1940 NO6 Comanche NO6

In addition to horses, woman must be placed largely in the category of property, for her legal disabilities and low status made her very much a chattel, first to her father and brother, later to her husband. The several facets of this problem have been repeatedly examined in preceding sections.

In addition, domesticated dogs must be included in the category of private property. They abounded, but were of little economic value or importance save as camp scavengers and to warn of prowling enemies. (Except the notorious Comanche canine, Mákutavai, whose name was on the agency roles for many years as that of an Indian. His owner drew double rations from the government on this ruse.) The number of dogs arose from the existence of a tabu against killing them. Because of their identification with Coyote, dogs are believed to possess some power. To kill one brings bad luck expecially to one's children. People without children trained some dogs as pets, babying them and nursing them like a child. When the band was moving camp, these people would put such dogs on a horse to ride.

The idea of liability for acts of animals did not exist. There was no recompense for a dog bite. Nor could damages be sought for injuries received from a kicking horse. A quick-tempered man, however, might kill the horse on the spot. In such event, informants said there would be no call for damages to compensate for the horse. So it was with a dog, owned by another person, which was killed in anger. Post Oak Jim thought that "something might have been done about it" if the dog had been given to the owner by a dead friend, but not if the dog had been raised by the owner himself.

Finally, in regard to food, principles of generosity placed a sort of public lien upon the game a Comanche hunter brought down. A man who returned to camp with meat was obliged to share it with all who came for some. He had to give the best part to his wife to take to her father. Other portions he gave to those who asked. "If a man won't give it away, they camp on him until he does." This means obligation. But performance was not always spontaneous or achieved. In a hard winter She Invites Her Relatives observed that some people moved out of the camp so that they would not have to share their food with the others. Any persons who came upon a hunter and his game could claim any quarter by touching it. If there were enough claimants, the only part going to the slayer was the hide. The hunter asserted his right to this by seizing the tail. How similar this rings to Eskimo practice! The obligation seems here more than mere generosity; "They would camp on him." Generosity based on ethics appears rather in the buffalo hunt, a communal venture with a prospectively full supply, where the slain brutes were individually claimed. There young men were taught to kill a fat cow or two for the old men, who would even make

3: Wallace & Hoebel E-4, 5 (1933, 1945) 1952
NO6 Comanche NO6

627 other individual within the same group was not punishable in the same way as a wrong done by an out-grouper. Public opinion might be strongly antagonistic to the wrongdoer, but the settlement of even murder was not considered a matter for "legal" interference by society. Therefore, murder was essentially a wrong and only vaguely a crime. The family group or kin could punish a member of their own group. There does not appear to have been any definite custom. What happened inside the kin group was the business of nobody outside the group; and inside the group, the way of handling a situation depended largely on personality and temperament.

627 One variation of the in-group character of in-group action was the privilege-right of the husband to kill his wife. For this, retaliation ● 562 appears to have been abnormal. The legal position of woman was largely that of chattel, and upon marriage she passed from the original family to the husband. That the kinship group showed no inclination to retaliate when a husband killed his wife—their genetic relative—can mean nothing else than a true relinquishment of the kinship bond upon marriage in favor of a supreme marital bond. The kin of the erring wife might plead with the husband or offer him gifts to prevent the killing, but there was nothing to compel him to accept them and forego meting out punishment. Furthermore, society recognized the right of a brother to kill his sister who, disregarding the recognized social pattern of brother-sister avoidance, came into his presence in violation of his wishes. The brother-in-law of Kills Something shot his sister for such an offense.[10] Apparently, in such a case the killer suffered no social disgrace.

The privilege-right of a husband to kill his wife was paralleled by his privilege to handle her most cruelly in an attempt to force her to name a suspected lover. He could take her out to a lonely spot and choke her until she informed. Or he might prefer to hold her prone over a fire, slowly lowering her closer and closer to the flames, until she in anguish confessed and named her lover. There was no device in Comanche law by which a husband with a grievance could seek an impartial judgment on the alleged male miscreant in the case. Guilt had to be certain before the legal suit could begin. When there was doubt as to the facts, the hapless women were the goats.

[10] Informant: Kills Something.

Government and Law

Men also killed their wives at times when they suffered chronic ailments and medicine cures had failed. A case is reported of a chief who cut the throat of his wife, who had been ill for a long time, to avoid the inconvenience of caring for her. After making "medicine of preparation" to fit her for a happy reception in the land of spirits, he took her life, though mourning her untimely death. Such deeds were rare, however.

In spite of the legal right of a husband to kill his wife, a man who killed his wives too recklessly was considered "mean" by the people. Yet, if he were insensitive to such disapproval, and particularly if he were brave enough to maintain his status through coups, there was little to stop him, except that new wives became more difficult to get. On the other hand, attempts of wives on the lives of husbands were rare indeed.

Of acts taking on a criminal tinge there was only one category—excessive sorcery. Among other Plains tribes violation of the communal buffalo-hunt rules, i.e., going out to hunt alone or beating the signal for the mass charge, was one of the most severe public offenses. The military society police in charge of the hunts were wont to handle any such miscreant roughly. But the Comanches were the great exception.

Ralph Linton has suggested that a superabundance of bison on the Southern Plains made formal police sanctions functionally unnecessary for the Comanches; however, the historical evidence cited earlier indicates that food was not always easy to come by. However this may be, it is quite evident that the Comanches felt no need to make a crime of violation of the rules of the communal hunt. Furthermore, unlike the other Plains tribes, who felt the need and also had an admirably suited mechanism at hand for fulfillment of the need, the Comanches with their Shoshonean background possessed no military societies. They let the matter ride.

Sorcery that got out of hand was another matter. The Comanches were only slightly plagued by witchcraft. As Ruth Benedict once observed, "Sorcery is a fear-projection, and the Comanches were not ridden by fear."[20] Ralph Linton has emphatically reiterated that only old men, who could no longer compete on a warrior basis, turned to

[20] In conversation with Hoebel.

10:Horn T-3 (1836-1837) 1955
NO6 Comanche NO6

conciliate the favor of, the Author of the war of elements, I could not determine. Another circumstance induced me to think they might have some notions of a future state. There was a young woman among them, who certainly possessed some traits of character more amiable by far than the most of her race with whom I was acquainted; she sickened and died, when their grief, as usual, was unbounded. I observed to one of the females, that I hoped she was better off than when here; – she smiled, and pointed upwards. The strength of their attachment to each other, and the demonstration they give of the same, even to the dividing of the last morsel with each other upon the point of starvation, might put many professed christians to the blush! But they are just the reverse of all this to all the world beside. They think themselves the cleverest race of men on earth, and treat all others as infinitely inferior to themselves. They have no formal marriages among them. They generally take wives at an early age. Each man is allowed to take five women; but, in making his selection, the ties of consanguinity oppose no barrier; hence they are truly a consanguineous race of so motley a mixture, that it would be impossible to identify the connexions. The distinction, however, [56] might be less obscure, but for the fact, that with them matrimonial alliances oppose no restraint to promiscuous intercourse. The relation of the women to the men differs little from a state of the

10:Horn T-3 (1836-1837) 1955
NO6 Comanche NO6

most abject slavery. It is impossible to conceive of 593
a more absolute despotism, than that under which 562
the wife is held by her husband in these savage
wilds. When they hunt the buffalo, she must carry
his gun, and whatever else is to be carried; when [224]
he shoots the buffalo, it would be infinitely beneath
his dignity to put his hand to it afterwards; she
has it to skin, to cut up the meat, and, whatever be
the distance, or the difficulties in the way, the poor
creature must carry the hide, meat, and all, to the
camp, and if it cannot be done at once, she must
go and return until it is done. At the camp, she has
to do all; to provide the fuel, to fetch the water, [462]
to dress the buffalo skins, to dig the grave, and
bury the dead. Her lordly master will seldom so
much as turn himself, to get a drink of water, or
to get his moccasins, or indeed anything he might
please to want. In all the above, he speaks, and is
instantly obeyed. Never, until I was shut up in the
horrible shades of pagan darkness, where the long
night of Nature holds her iron reign, did I see and
feel the indebtedness particularly of my sex to the
precepts of the gospel of Christ! (Would not the
publication of it to these poor heathen do them
some good? Would not its peaceful and equaliz-
ing precepts, help to raise these poor oppressed
females, could they be brought to bear upon their
cruel husbands?)

In their apparel, they differ little (as I should 291
suppose) from other tribes, unless it be in the

21: Burnet T-5 (1818- 819) 1954 NO6 Comanche NO6
Texas

[ca. 1818] 000

auxiliary to an otherwise impotent authority. The pains 175
and penalties of their criminal laws, are confined almost
exclusively to the weaker sex. The incontinence of a wife, 562
is punished by cutting off her nose. This odious abscission 175
is made from the junction of the cartilage and bond, ob- 684
liquely down to the lip. Several instances of this shocking
penal infliction are now extant. But the sentence of muti- 175
lation is sometimes remitted in consequence of the interpo- 696
sition of male connections. The decisions of the law always
yield to a determined resistance.

If one man wantonly kills another, the nearest friend 175
of the deceased, is permitted, and indeed it devolves upon 627
him as a duty, to revenge his death, by taking the life of 682
the murderer. But the price of blood, may be commuted
for articles of more value and convenience than blood, and
murder may be atoned for, and the spirit of revenge ap-
peased by liberal donations to the living relatives of the
deceased. Such atrocities however, seldom occur. Notwith- 175
standing the extreme laxity of their whole economy of gov- 571
ernment, and their entire exemption from legal restraint,
they live together with a degree of harmony that would do
credit to the most refined and best organized societies. The 175
little bickerings and jealousies and inordinate strivings for 578
thrift and distinction, that disquiet and mar the social circles
of refinement, are unknown to the rude and simple children
of nature.

The Comanchee system of religion is about as perfect 175
and luminous as that of their jurisprudence. They believe 771
in a Supreme Being, and in a future state of existence, but
have adopted no mode or manner of worship. Indeed they 175
consider the Supreme Being, to be so far removed from them 771
as not to wish to interfere directly, in their temporal con- 776
cerns, and as equally unwilling to be interfered with. They [775]
therefore leave him to enjoy his repose without molestation,
and expect the same indulgence for themselves. They have
no idea of a special superintending Providence, or that the
Great Spirit takes any particular cognizance of the actions
of men. And they consequently defer all their devotional 175
concerns, if indeed they entertain any, to a dark futurity, 771

21: Burnet T-5 (1818-1819) 1954 NO6 Comanche NO6
Texas

The Squaws are [ca. 1818] literally "hewers of wood and drawers of water," to their dominate and supercilious husbands. Every description of domestic labour is imposed upon them to a degree not usual, even among savages, and they seem to endure the burden with an uncomplaining cheerfulness; or rather, with the quiescence of a temper subdued by habit and ignorance, to a condition the most onerous and humiliating. But commiseration is more sensibly awakened to their moral, than to their physical state, for they exhibit a total departure from every thing that is amiable or interesting in the sex. To the most hideous degeneracy from feminine suavity and agreeableness of person, they unite a more than commensurate debasement of mind and manners. The choice porcelain of nature has become as the coarsest potters clay; and the bland adornments of female character, have given place to a fierce and unmitigated barbarism. In truth the largest portion of the nation's barbarity consists in the character of their women. They are infinitely more cruel and ferocious than the men, and are much more addicted to pilfering, in which they have acquired a proficiency that almost defies detection. They take a peculiar delight in torturing the adult male prisoners, who, according to an ancient custom, are surrendered to their fiend-like amusement for three days succeeding their arrival in the village. The quantum of punishment that is inflicted, is however, in some degree proportioned to the events of the campaign. If the war party have suffered no damage, it is comparatively light and trivial, amounting only to a few gentle flagellations, by way of giving merriment to the dance, and cadence to the song of triumph. But those who are captured on a disastrous excursion, are punished with a most revolting barbarity, that often terminates in death. During the three days of abandonment by the men, the prisoner is stretched on the ground, each extremity pinioned to a stake, where he lies motionless, save in the writhings of fear and anguish, and exposed to the fury of the squaws, who alternately recreate themselves by inflicting on their prostrate enemy every variety of torture that a savage fancy can suggest. At evening the passive victim is released, to undergo a more

22: Dacus Q-3 (no date) 1960 NO6 Comanche NO6
(ca. 1870)

[ca 1870]

Mountains. But these collections form a very small part of the food necessary to sustain life.

The animals killed in the chase are skinned, cut up, and brought to camp by the women, who follow the hunters for that purpose. The whole of the carcass is utilized. The entrails are regarded as appetizing morsels. They rarely use any condiment with their meat. When brought home, the women kindle fires and proceed to partly roast the choice pieces for their lords. The poorest pieces of flesh they may be permitted to reserve for themselves.

The Comanches are expert horsemen and skillful archers. The iron-tipped arrow impelled from a Comanche's *bois d'arc* bow, is a dangerous missile. They easily send it through an inch board; and I have seen the rib of an old bullock shattered by one of those arrows.

Among them, the women are the most abject slaves. The men do nothing, except to follow the chase, go on the war-path, or decorate themselves with feathers and paint. Even this last operation conducive to manly vanity, sometimes falls to the task of the female slaves of the lodge. The slaughtered animals on the plains are brought in by them; the skins are dressed by women, fuel is collected; the herds of ponies are watched; plumes are made, the paint bags are kept in order; the tents or lodges are erected; food is prepared; and, if after performing all these services the Comanche lady finds time heavy on her hands, she is made to minister to the pleasure of her sovereign lord by adorning his buckskin leggings with delicate splotches of paint, and graceful tufts of feather plucked from the prairie eagle; to streak his face with vermillion, yellow ochre, and charcoal, until he appears in all the glory of a full fledged dandy, and then he saunters forth to exhibit his charms to the susceptible maidens of his tribe. The wife, or the daughter, must, at least apparently, be delighted at the magnificent "make up" of the dandy husband or father. Theirs is not the privilege to complain.

Among the Comanches, all women occupy the position of slaves. The daughter is the slave to the father; the wife to the husband, and if there are any who do not occupy the relationship of daughter or wife, they are slaves to some male relative, or to the tribe. The father sells his daughter in marriage, and the husband may sell his wife for a pony, a shining piece of silver, or a handful of beads.

The women can form no ties, make no bargain, and exercise no choice in social or domestic relations. The father selects a husband for his daughter, exacts a consideration, if she proves agreeable to the chosen son-in-law, and consigns her to him, to do with her as he will. She becomes his slave,

29: Hoebel E-4,5 (1933) 1969 NO6 Comanche NO6

Out of apparent weakness emerged the wildest marauding brigandage. The Comanches whipped and drove the Apaches from the southern Plains. They stalemated the Spanish. They decimated the pueblo of Pecos. They ranged far below the Rio Grande on slave- and booty-taking raids into Old Mexico. They blocked the westward expansion of the Texas frontier for several decades. They became "The Spartans of the Prairies." They were rough, tough, aggressive and militant individualists. They gave trouble to all their enemies and to themselves. And in their way, out of the nothingness of Shoshone legal backgrounds they shaped a crude but effective system of law to cope with the clashes of individual with individual within their ranks.

. . .

The basic postulates of the Comanche way of life are simple and few. They express a strong individualism and man-to-man aggressiveness in the following terms:

Postulate I. The individual is supreme in all things.

Postulate II. The self of the male is realized in striving for accumulated war honors, horses, and women.

Postulate III. Women are sexually and economically desirable but are inferior and subordinate to men.

Corollary 1. The sex rights of a husband to his wife are limited to himself and his brothers.

Postulate IV. The strongest social tie is that of brother to brother.

Postulate V. Sexual relations between kin (incest) constitutes subhuman behavior.

Postulate VI. War is essential to the prosperity of the tribe and the individual self-expression of the male.

Postulate VII. The great spirits (Sun and Earth) have powers of "legal" judgment.

Postulate VIII. Each Comanche ought to cooperate with others and help them in their life's activities.

Corollary 1. Altruism and sharing of goods is socially desirable.

Corollary 2. The killing of a fellow tribesman is not permissible.

Postulate IX. Horses, especially favorite horses, have quasi-human personalities.

The simple needs of Comanche society did not impose any great social pressure for governmental controls, and the high value placed upon individual freedom of action also worked to hold government at a minimum. If a Comanche had been invited to subscribe to a political slogan, he would have given his assent to the proposition that "that government is best which governs least." So fully was this precept expressed in a lack of political action that That's It, one of the most acute of our Comanche informants,

31: Jones , E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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necessary since so much of the material upon which this study was based came from a single informant. The particular relationship which I experienced with Sanapia doubtless colored the kinds of information which I obtained from her. 121

There was both an age and a sex difference between Sanapia and me, besides the obvious cultural differences. The rapidity with which she adopted me into her household was as cumbersome as it was helpful, for by this stroke I lost many of the advantages which formalized interviewing can lend, while gaining the advantages of confidences and a relative invisibility. She adopted me as her son and in so doing promoted an imbalance in our relationship in which she was in the position to demand more of me than I was of her. This relationship gave me the opportunity to gather much information concerning her attitudes and sentiments relating to her self-concept and her view of herself in relation to Comanche society as a whole, while it was more difficult to gather those kinds of data dealing with the more overt and obvious aspects of her role. She seemed to feel that by the simple fact of adopting me I would know all the necessary premises, and she would react irritably when I would question her on those subjects about which she felt I already knew. Also, by being classified as a "young son," *tuβitsi*, I was expected to interact more with her sons, grandson, and nephews and to maintain a respect–distance from Sanapia. 123

The sex difference was not as important as the age difference since Sanapia, [562] [114] [115] [142]

Sanapia and the author.

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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123 being a *puhakut*, considered herself equal to a male. However, I did notice that
562 females who interviewed Sanapia were able to gather information of a much different nature than I was able to obtain. The differences were not crucial, but mainly differences of tone and level. Because of the social position in which she felt herself to be, she tended to "talk down" to females, while she would converse with me as a social equal.

123 The fact that I was so closely associated with Sanapia and her family also tended to affect my relationship with other Comanches. I was not reacted to as a harmless and innocuous outsider. I was Sanapia's "friend" or "son." Consequently, Sanapia's sympathizers would be overly gracious in discussions, while her enemies would be unduly harsh. It was often difficult to retain control in an interview. This entire situation was aggravated because Sanapia, perhaps because of her role as a *puhakut*, was more apt to draw an emotional rather than a rational reaction.

Naturally, because of my close association with the northern bands, I was found highly suspect by the southern Comanche bands. I must admit that I had less personal sympathy for the southern band members, possibly because of my initial enculturation by the northerners. This may have made me more susceptible to identify the cleavage in Comanche society between northern and southern "tribes." I attempted to guard my emotions in this area by establishing historical roots for the divisions in Comanche society and by offering rationalizations for my major use of northern informants. The bulk of my data comes from *Yapai* and *Kwahada* band members; for the most part, these are the Comanches of whom I speak.

Sanapia is approaching the last days of her career as doctor and is beginning to prepare for the training of her successor. She views this study as the book of her Medicine way and feels that if she should die before she is able to complete the training of her successor, this book will act to complete the training.

> I'm going to give him [Sanapia's grandson] all that. He might not keep it up, but he'll have those medicines to work with. I'm going to make him understand too. You [referring to the author] got to write down all those medicines what I tell you . . . write it on a book and keep it until he gets old enough. If I'm still living two or three years, well, if I pass away then you could just tell him that . . . just give him what you taking down.

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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175 man, if he was fortunate, could become a peace chief, but a peace chief possessed
178 no real authority and functioned most importantly as a mediator in the disputes
624 which arose among the younger men.

With the greater food supply offered by the seemingly boundless bison
175 herds, hunting magic decreased in importance. Antelope magic did persist from
178 the Shoshone heritage. The more favorable living conditions and constant food
224 supply also allowed the individual bands, which had retained their Basin character-
[789] istics, to become larger and to achieve a greater degree of independence from their
621 sister bands. The emphasis on the buffalo as a food source also tended to decrease
[222] the importance of gathering and exploitation of the floral environment for food. Further, the Comanches made little or no use of fish and of such small game as rabbits (Lowie 1954:6).

175 The Basin Shoshone practice of infanticide disappeared as the family group
178 could more efficiently care for its offspring. The practice of enculturating slaves
[847] and captives became common among the Comanches in order to augment their
[727] numbers and specifically to free males for hunting and warfare. The stress on
[562] war and hunting also tended to debase the position of women, and such practices
[593] as the mutilation of wives, a custom which had never occurred in Basin Shoshone
[309] culture, came into practice.

Patterns of religious belief and behavior also underwent certain changes
175 from Basin life to the Plains. A vaguely defined belief in a Great Spirit persisted,
178 as did the relative lack of concern with the afterlife. However, the intense fear of
771 ghosts held by the Basin Shoshone diminished in the Comanche Plains culture.
[776] Also, the practice of power transmission from individual to individual, instead
715 of power source to individual, developed in importance. The decrease in ghost
[776] fear and, it is assumed, witchcraft in Comanche culture, as opposed to the Basin
715 culture, was greatly facilitated by the lessening of intrasocial tensions and the
754 Comanches' ability, through warfare, to turn aggressions outward and away from
578 the primary group. As a whole, Comanche religious patterns were exceedingly
[721] simple and lacking in elaborate ceremonialism and ritual, at least compared to their
[796] Plains neighbors (Hoebel 1940:83).

The Comanches possessed characteristics, other than their paucity of
175 ceremonialism, which served to differentiate them from other Plains tribes. The
171 Comanche bands were more self-managing than bands found among other Plains
[621] groups. Warrior societies, a diagnostic trait of Plains culture, were lacking in
575 Comanche society except in the most rudimentary form. The Sun Dance was not
796 a vital aspect of Comanche culture. Decoration of clothing with beads, quills,
291 and ornaments of bone, shell, and metal was deemphasized, while heavy fringing
[342] of the garments was the rule. The Comanche tepee was built on a four-pole base like that of the Blackfoot, Sarsi, Ute, and Shoshone; while the Comanches' historic neighbors, such as the Kiowa, Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Kiowa-Apache used a three-pole foundation (Lowie 1954:33).

72 By the early nineteenth century the bison herds were greatly diminished
[225] on the south Plains, and the Comanches increasingly turned to raiding to augment their economy. During this period the Comanches raided New Mexico, the Santa Fe Trail, northern Texas, and Old Mexico, sometimes as far south as Durango.

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 N06 Comanche N06
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Some years later Sanapia married again, and many of my informants say that it was at this time that Sanapia abruptly ceased the behavior which had caused her so much notoriety. This was also the period during which Sanapia earnestly began her career as a doctor. Every account of cases which Sanapia treated stems from a time no later than 1945.

Sanapia and her present spouse have traveled extensively in the western United States. Their route always corresponds to areas of Indian population density. In the following, Sanapia recounts her first excursion to Wyoming.

> We went to New Mexico and to Las Vegas. We went over there. We just went, you know. We don't know where we going but we just went that way. Came to Navajos, Pueblos, and we visit among them and we stop at Las Vegas. Mind you, at that time I sure like to gamble. And so I went over there and start gambling. J——— [Sanapia's husband] said, "You better quit. We long way from home." And I just said, "As long as we stay here I'm going to gamble. If we lose anything, I win it back." Wanted him to get me some money. And so we stayed about ten days and then we went on. We went to Wyoming. They, the Shoshones, live in a reservation at Fort Washington, north from Lander, . . . town of that name, I think. Maybe something else. They live close together to one another, you know, not like us. We live so many miles from each other. They don't work, they don't do nothing. Just all day long they drum and sing and dance and every day something is going on and gambling is the biggest part of it. Well, when we first got over to Wyoming, that afternoon, we ask where are the Shoshone peoples. We was right there among them and we didn't even know it. We went into a big building, you know . . . it was their community building or something like a club or something like that. We went in. It was full of Indians. They was sitting around in groups around the floor. And there was blankets and they was sitting on it. And then we stand there and look at them and they was gambling . . . playing Mexican monte. And so I wanted to find out what my grandmather had told me so I went up and listen and when they talk about us. We didn't talk. We just be standing there. And they said "These are some kind of Indians, maybe Mexicans. They sure look like Mexicans." They said that. And we said, "We not Mexicans," . . . in Indian. And they look at one another and said, "Do you all talk like us?" and we said, "Yeah, we talk like you all." I said, "We your ancestors. That where we come from." So that evening they invite us to their homes . . . this whole group of people and that night we have group of Indians there. They were all talking to us . . . finding out where we live and where we come from and all that. And I told them, "You are the people that my grandmother told me about." And I told them about that big sickness what the Indians caught, and then I said, "You all got that and then you scattered. You belong to our tribe. That's what my grandmother told me." And they were surprised, you know.

Training to Become a Doctor

Sanapia recalls the four years of training to become a doctor as the most important years of her life. It is to those years that Sanapia owes the prestige which she enjoys today among the northern Comanches. As a doctor, she holds a status in her society equal to a man. She is at the zenith of traditionally defined prestige and social power acquirable by a woman in Comanche society.

The first phase of Sanapia's training began in the summer before her last

31: Jones E-5 (1967-1970) 1972 NO6 Comanche NO6
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Precipitating Factors

186 775 154 156 The precipitating factors to ghost sickness need not be as externally dramatic as those thus far presented. The drama and the trauma of these factors dwell within the psychological makeup of the particular individual involved. The contraction of ghost sickness can function as a psychic reminder to a Comanche that he is a Comanche. It can serve to reaffirm his ethnic identity. It may be a self-inflicted punishment by a native-oriented Comanche who begins to doubt his traditional culture. Ghost sickness has also served to dramatically solve generational tensions. A young person contracts ghost sickness to signal acquiescence to the parent generation's demands. However, all these factors are ultimately related to the disruptive influences of acculturation with the dominant white society.

186 775 154 156 184 177 The recently developed Comanche ghost complex appears to be a means by which certain Comanche individuals can circumvent the psychological impasses which have appeared as a result of the twentieth-century Comanche life situation. It is particularly beneficial for the traditional group for several reasons. If a Comanche individual chooses this means of relief, he is committed to return to the traditionalist fold. The ghost complex might be viewed as a selective net which the traditional group has thrown around itself. Those Comanches who are drawn into the conditions which lead to the emotional states in which they would unconsciously choose ghost sickness as an "out" are usually relatively sensitive and intelligent individuals and therefore valuable as group members. They would have to fully and traumatically feel their intolerable cultural and psychological position prior to ghost sickness. Those Comanches who approach these same conditions and who fail to react to them, or acculturate, or turn to such relief as alcoholism, would not be very valuable social components to the traditional group in any case. This "net" operates to more effectively retain the big fish, while it lets the little fish run.

186 775 154 156 184 177 562 The fact that men are afflicted by ghost sickness more often than women could be explained by several factors, particularly, the greater degree of independence ideally expected of men, coupled with the real economic dependence of men; in many cases, dependence on women. Women are more effectively controlled by the primary group, while Comanche men are expected to "act like men" in the face of economic difficulties and a white society which does not recognize them as men.

Change in Behavior

186 775 154 156 184 177 The behavior change exhibited by ghost-sickness victims from prior to the onset of ghost sickness until the termination of the cure corresponds with one of the desires which stimulated the victim to ghost sickness in the first place—total identification with the traditional group. They become model traditional-oriented group members, while, prior to ghost sickness, they behaved in a manner considered erratic, bizarre, or "crazy" by these Comanches.

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
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These young Indians had
spent less time on horseback and more time inside, out of the weather; nor had they ever ridden the war trails. The women of this group took better care of their hair. The older women's hair generally had an untidy look.

This sullen aloofness and aimless drifting didn't affect the younger children—it seemed to set in when a boy got to be fifteen or sixteen years old. The younger children, when they arrived home on vacation, were bursting with energy. They rode their ponies helter-skelter over the prairies and rivaled the channel cat in Cache Creek with their cavorting, swimming, and diving.

They came to town with their parents—the girls riding in a hack or the little lumber wagon with the women. If it was the wagon, the bows and canvas cover converted it into a little prairie schooner. On a nice day the canvas would be rolled up a ways on either side, to let the air through.

Comanche men and boys never rode in the wagon or hack with the women. The boys would be riding along with their father, horseback. If there were not enough stock saddles to go around, the younger boys would be riding ancient Mexican-type saddles. These Mexican saddles had a flat look, compared to the up-to-date stock saddle. Neither the fork nor the cantle was as high, while the seat was broader. Its most distinguishing feature was the top of the fork. Thin, broad, and round, it made one think of a pancake. I am sure the tops of some of the horns were as much as four inches across.

Somehow, the youngsters always had a few nickels to spend for candy, cakes, and wax—their name for all kinds of chewing gum. The happy parents stood around and glowed in their pride. Sometimes the parents had one of the youngsters show off—they would have one of the boys interpret as they bought their groceries or other store items. They wanted everyone in the store to see how much their children had learned.

But all this youthful, happy exuberance suddenly vanished in the late teens. Few of the girls stayed in school as long as the boys, and the girls never got the good from their Carlisle clothes. About the second or third time they came to the store after their last year in school, they would buy some gay-colored, patterned calico along with matching cotton braid. The next time you saw them, they would be wearing a *pit-si-qui-na*.

The young men did wear out their white man's clothes, but seem-

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
NO6 Comanche NO6
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883 ingly remembered none of the white man's ways. And they seemed to
177 have forgotten the old tribal ways as well.

[291] In my thinking, I found it convenient to put the women and girls
562 in yet another group. One of the first things I learned was the taboo
191 which prevented women and girls from talking to men, Indians or white, other than their own menfolks, excepting on the most necessary
[123] occasions. Because of this I never addressed them unless they spoke to me.

124 I was consciously making every effort to learn as much of the
[122] language as I could, and in time I was able to catch on quickly to what the men were talking about and to follow their conversation.
[198] But the women seemed to have a vocabulary of their own. I would often listen to a group of women talking in the store, or out in the camp, but I could distinguish only an occasional word.

657 Those who conceived of educating the Indian youths also con-
871 ceived the idea that the educating must be done in faraway places, and little has been done through the years to change the practice.
[171] Even as I type this article, several hundred Indian children from New Mexico, Arizona, and other western states are attending Chilocco Indian School in northern Oklahoma.

657 While in Carlisle or other Indian boarding schools, Indian children
871 had slept in clean beds with sheets changed every week. They had sat
177 in chairs at a table with a clean tablecloth and had eaten food served from clean dishes. They had been taught the use of the knife, fork,
178 and spoon. But when the Indian boy arrived home for good, he had only his parents' camp to go to. Though the Comanche families were living on their allotments, they continued to live a camp life, much the same as they had lived the previous twenty-five years as Reservation Indians.

352 In this camp our Carlisle graduate sat on the ground, or a log, or
264 a goods box. He ate his food from a pie tin and was served directly from the kettle in which the food had been cooked. If a boy was lucky, he had a fork and spoon to go along with his pocketknife as eating utensils.

513 Spring, summer, and fall they all slept in the brush arbor on plat-
[342] forms and under seldom-washed cotton blankets. When the northers became blue and came with regularity, they slept in conventional tents, either on the ground or on low platforms constructed with
342 poles. Once in a while, as I rode on my collection trips, I would see a

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
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584 to the Comanches. The girl told young Parker that if it was his intention to live around Cache, become another Carlisle loafer, and bask in the reflection of his father's glory, she wasn't interested. But if he was willing to go away and live where people had never heard of the Comanches or of Quanah Parker, she would marry him.

Quanah's son agreed to leave Oklahoma, and they married and moved to Florida. The one thing young Parker could think of that 472 he would have the nerve to try was driving a baggage wagon. So they bought a team and a light dray, and he began hauling baggage and making light deliveries. He made a living from the start, and in time built a first-class transfer business.

177 But Charley Ross and Quanah Parker's son were exceptions. As a lawyer in Oklahoma City I saw a number of pitiable incidents in the 609 courts, in which Indians who couldn't catch hold of the new life were testifying through an interpreter. I know they had been sent to government schools, but they preferred to pretend they didn't know English, rather than to accept the responsibilities of their training. They wished to be thought of as belonging to an older generation that had been denied advantages.

562 The educated young women, too, fell into the dull, dawdling [563] existence led by their men, although I did know two girls, just out of school, who married industrious white men and became hard-working 842 wives, and whose unions prospered financially. (Comanche wives, by the way, seldom bore more than two children, and often only one. But mixed marriages, particularly those of a white man and a Comanche woman, produced fruitfully.)

191 One episode illustrates the attitude of most of the educated women. 124 We had been operating the store several months, and I was proud of my good trade vocabulary. I knew the Comanche name for almost everything in the store that might interest the Indians, and I know their names and designations of money. One day, however, I was neither making myself understood by a very old squaw nor understanding what she was trying to tell me.

The ancient one's patience wore thin, and I am sure the line of chatter flowing from her withered lips in a stream was not complimentary to either my intelligence or my ancestry. Then I was suddenly rescued by a pleasant-faced, nice-mannered young Comanche woman on whom I had waited many times. "She wants coffee," she told me in perfect English.

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
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In Comanche society, once a woman left her father's camp she must of necessity become a wife. There was not another nook or cranny of Comanche society into which she could crowd herself. There were no avocations open to her. Prostitution and concubinage were not countenanced, and the enslavement of an unattached Comanche woman by another Comanche was completely unthinkable. (An example of the length to which a Comanche's obligation to respect the rights of other Comanches extended may be seen in the situation of the semiwild dogs that infested every camp. These dogs were not pets—they were parasites. But they could be neither killed nor mistreated. They were relatives of the coyote; and since the coyote was a relative of the Comanche, one had as well abuse another Comanche as one of these semiwild dogs.)

Provision for widows was made in this manner: if a man was killed, or if he died from disease, his wives became the wives of his brother or brothers, and his children became the children of his brother or brothers. There was also a relationship known as blood brotherhood, in which two men mingled their blood together. Such a blood brother could succeed as the husband of his deceased blood brother's wives.

During the more than five years when I was among the Comanches and was dealing with them, I became sold on polygamy as a way of life for them. They made it work. After twenty-six years of peace, there continued to be a much larger number of women than men. Though all but three of the old warrior group that I knew had more than one wife, and a number had three or more, I knew of no single man in that age group. Neither were there surplus unattached women. And women must have outnumbered men in the age group of forty-five years and over, by considerably more than two to one.

As nearly as I was able to discover, the multiple wife situation was a development rather than the result of a plan. A man did not decide he was going to have two, three, or more wives and go out and purchase the number he had decided upon. He started modestly, as a young warrior, with the purchase of one wife. Then as he prospered, gained a reputation, and accumulated a horse herd and maybe a baby or two, the work would become too heavy for one wife. Obviously they couldn't secure a hired girl, so they looked around and probably decided between them who would make a satisfactory and agreeable number two wife. When possible, a younger sister of the number

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
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595 462 went about her tasks cheerfully and willingly. Whichever one of the women divided the labor reserved enough for herself so that she was just as busy as the other women.

857 462 The little girls of the family stayed close to the women the day through, and performed tasks suitable for their ages. But the little boys roamed far and wide, never seeming to have any duties except when they were helping their father with the horses.

521 522 462 [296] [124] During group tasks there was always quite a bit of conversation and considerable laughing. In warm weather the women would go to the creek together, select a place in the shade where the water was about six or eight inches deep, and sit in the water on the sandy bottom to do the family wash. I never learned what the talk and laughter were about, as I was never able to accumulate a squaw vocabulary.

521 562 604 124 [198] (Comanche women held only the most necessary conversation with any man, Indian or white, other than their own menfolks. And while I was generally able to figure out the subject of the men's conversation and follow its progress, I seldom recognized a word used by the women when they conversed among themselves. At times I was inclined to think they even had a different language.)

595 516 [352] The same air of camaraderie seemed to prevail whenever the wives were together in a group. I noticed it in the store whenever there was only one family present. Their trading done, the wives would draw their chairs into a group and converse. They never had chairs in their camps, but the women never passed up the several chairs we had in the store—although once in a while some quite old squaw would insist on sitting on the floor. If the chairs were all occupied, the women never hesitated to sit on the floor, and the people trading would walk around them.

595 Wherever you saw a man's wives—in town, on the reservation, or at a celebration—they always formed a group. You would not find one wife in a store and another out on the street. Two or more groups of wives would often chat together in the store or sit together in the shade on the reservation or at a powwow.

595 422 294 One custom which seemed odd to me was that of each wife's having her own sewing machine. The sewing done by the average family was not so extensive that one machine would not easily have sufficed. Yet each wife would have her own—something I had been alerted to look for by an article that had appeared in the *Star* commenting that each of Quanah Parker's wives had her individual sewing machine.

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
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452 When their money ran out before payment time, we would credit those who were not heavy drinkers until the next Grass Money time. Though all merchandise was charged to the husband, the wives bought in the same way. We followed the custom of keeping the sales slip for each wife's purchases with her name, but we were never called upon to show who bought what. I wondered whether the wives had an after-payment settlement.

432 The women always had a lot of fun buying dry goods. We kept yardsticks laid out along the dry-goods counter so that a woman could point to the particular bolt she was interested in. Each bought for herself and her children; but as each made her choices, the other wife or wives stood by the counter and passed remarks freely about her selections. These remarks always caused much merriment, not only within the group itself but also from other Indian women listening in.

177 One white custom at which the Comanche women never ceased
829 to wonder was the freedom with which white women would converse with men other than those of their own families. A homesteader's wife who had not talked to anyone but her husband for two weeks would come in plumb full of talk. As she was doing her buying, she would tell me all about the crops, the new calves or colts, and where she and her husband would be driving to church or a picnic the next day. In turn she would want to know all about what happened in town, who had had a baby, who had died, and all the gossip. Meanwhile Indian women who had, I knew, been to Carlisle or Chilocco would be listening very intently and talking in low tones to other women sitting near, apparently describing the conversation.

562 Comanche men and boys could scarcely help being vain, with all the attention the women and girls of the family bestowed upon them. This was especially apparent when the family as a whole was going to
292 a gathering of any kind, white or Indian. The women would have the finest of shirts and neck scarves prepared for the husband and the boys to wear for the occasion. Often the shirt and bandana would
302 be made from the finest red or pink silk. Nearly all the men wore
301 their hair long, and the husband would sport a new hairdo with strips of otter skin or fancy yarn braided in with the hair to increase the
292 size of the braid. The white sheet that was rolled up and worn around the waist like a sash had been washed and sun-bleached until it was of a dazzling whiteness.

32: Gilles O,X-3 (1902-c.1910) 1974
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The women and girls rode in the wagon or hack, but the men and boys would be mounted on their finest horses. Their saddles and bridles would be polished, and each would be carrying a gaudy quirt. I got the impression that when the men and boys were put on parade like this, they belonged to the whole family of women and girls. At least, they would all be equally puffed up with pride; It wouldn't have done to have pricked any one of them with a needle.

I grew up in a society where we all had Sunday clothes put away for special occasions. But this Comanche custom of dolling up the men and boys carried a greater significance for them. It was of a ritualistic nature.

To sum up: contrary to the impression of inner family turmoil I had received from the accounts in the *Star* and the *Journal* of the workings of polygamy, the Comanche made it work. As far as the older Comanches were concerned, it had been and was an ideal arrangement.

To all appearances, everyone involved in the multiple wife setup—the husband, the wives, the children—was quite happy with it. I never observed a quarrel between wives. I never saw one wife mistreat another. Nor did I ever observe a display of jealousy in relation to either husband or child.

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to chickens for frying, and there were few chickens in the country. 136

Even the great multitude of new tasks was soul-inspiring. I went ooo ahead with the freight wagons to the little inland town later to be known as Faxon, near where the present town of Faxon, Oklahoma, is. There was the freighting of lumber for the trading store my father planned to establish, the erection of the store building, and the freighting of the merchandise. I was clerking in the store, seeing all the new faces, continually meeting new people, and learning new names.

But none of these wonders was equal to seeing, meeting, and know- 123 ing the Comanche Indians. This was especially true when I sensed that one group of the Indians was inclined to be especially friendly toward me, and they made me feel that I was, in effect, one of them. This group was made up of the older men—the warrior group. They ranged in age from the late forties upward. I remember that in my mind I classed most of them as being in their fifties. Men obviously sixty and over were very scarce.

Since apparently all primitive people are attracted by large men, it may well be that my size helped me with my Comanche friendships. In my fifteenth year I largely had my growth. I was bigger than most men, and my muscles were well developed. Within my skills, I could do a man's work, and did. I continued to grow some until I was sixteen and was actually taller than I am now. I knew only three old Comanches that were taller than I. Quanah Parker and Comanche Jack were two of them.

I was properly thrilled. Here was living history. Here were men that had ridden the war trails to the bitter end: Adobe Walls, Palo Duro Canyon, the retreat to the Big Springs Mountains, and then the surrender at Fort Sill in June, 1875.

I had nothing in common with the teenagers near my age. They didn't work, fish, or hunt, as I did. There was no common meeting ground. What I called the Carlisle group, the older young people who had been to the Pennsylvania school and were much better educated than I, by and large ignored me. I have thought since that perhaps they were a trifle jealous of the attention the old fellows gave me. There was a conscious emotional gap between these educated Indians and the old fellows.

Soon after I arrived, an old squaw man gave me some very valu- 123 able information and advice. It summed up about like this: "If a white 609 man wants to gain the friendship and respect of the Comanche, he 562

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123 must stay completely apart from the Comanche women and girls." He
609 explained it this way. Comanche women are supposed to have no com-
562 munications, other than the most necessary, with menfolks other than their own, and this applied with extra force to white men. Comanche men held their women to strict account as to their conduct, and a white man could cause a Comanche woman serious trouble, unawares, should he try to be friendly. I lived up to this rule in every respect. Then, in addition, I naturally extended to all Indian women and girls every courtesy I had been taught to extend to women of my own race. This, too, could have had some bearing.

887 I could not help but notice Mo-cho-rook. He was a standout in every way. To start with, he was obviously the oldest of the old Indians. He was noticeably smaller than any of the other Indian men. And what was even more obvious, he had at this time only one wife. And of all the old fellows, he had by far the youngest wife and the youngest child. He was completely antisocial. I not only never gleaned
157 [123] a smile, but I never even drew a grunt from him, in the five plus years that I knew him.

On the top of all this, he had about the meanest look, and the cruelest eyes, I have ever seen on a human. I was later to know Geronimo, who was being held as a prisoner of war at Fort Sill. If anyone could have run Mo-cho-rook even a close second for looking mean and cruel, it would have been Geronimo.

The only time he ever came inside the store was when he needed smoking tobacco. He would have his nickel ready in his hand, would point to the Bull Durham, and when I handed him the tobacco, he would hand me the nickel. My fattest smile never brought a change in his expression. Once he had his tobacco, he would return outside. I never knew him to stay in out of even the most inclement weather.

142 I soon sorted out his wife. She was a young, large-limbed girl, with
854 the true Comanche copper color. She had a baby boy, around a year old. He was old enough to be out of the cradle board, but that first summer he was not walking as yet. He was a healthy-looking little
595 chap and, like all Indian babies, well behaved. I was later to learn that this child was the only one ever born to Mo-cho-rook by any of the numerous wives he had had. His squaw nearly always stayed in our store until they were ready to go home, and she bought all their
452 supplies. He was one of the few Indians who never found it necessary to run an account until Grass Money time.

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of our store with a recessed double doorway at the front. Old Warrior and his woman would take possession of this setback, spread down the blanket they rode on, sit down and pretend they didn't see anyone passing or hear anyone who spoke to them.

Once they were seated comfortably in the setback, they would have a ritualistic smoke. Mrs. Warrior would produce a baking-powder can from the folds of her blanket, take out a dried and trimmed oak leaf, hand it to her husband, then hide the can. After wetting the leaf with his tongue, Old Warrior would rub the moisture into the leaf with his thumb and forefingers.

During the leaf-softening and limbering process, the wife brought out a sack of Bull Durham smoking tobacco. When Old Warrior decided the leaf was properly conditioned, he took the tobacco sack and carefully poured the proper amount into the curved leaf. Care was exercised not to spill a grain of the precious weed.

Rolling tobacco into a cured leaf for a smoke is an art, or at least an accomplishment. There probably never was a white boy in all Comanche land who didn't try it at least once. When the leaf was rolled, it was necessary to hold it in place with thumb and finger to keep it from unrolling again.

By the time Old Warrior finished preparing the smoke, his wife, having caused the Bull Durham sack to disappear, produced a match. This ceremonial consumed even more time than my telling. Everything was done in slow motion. Maybe slow rhythm is a truer description. The ritual continued after the leaf cigarette was lighted; the husband took a few puffs and handed the cigarette to his wife; the wife had her puffs and handed it back. This exchange continued until the cigarette was too short to hold. They made the smoke last a surprisingly long time, but they never smoked a second cigarette, regardless of how late they had to wait for their whiskey.

I saw the same ritual performed a number of times by other old couples, and I have seen old men smoke by themselves, but I have no recollection of ever seeing a Comanche woman smoke by herself or with other women. We often had as many as a dozen wives sitting in the back of the store, but none of them ever smoked.

I questioned frontier friends about the old people's smoking. They said the plains Indians never used tobacco like the white man. Tobacco to the older Comanches was never a solace or a dissipation;

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553 Little significance attached to a girl's name. Often she was given
562a pet name by her mother at birth and probably not given a real name for several years. Once named, she carried that name for the rest of her life, even after her marriage.

115 Much of my information concerning Ca-vo-yo and name-giving came from Charley Ross, who in turn had received much of his information from his father, To-wa, and his father-in-law, Mi-he-suah, whom we called Mi-so. They and Ca-vo-yo were approximately the
726 same age, and the three had been young warriors together. Mi-so was wounded during the first charge at Adobe Walls. With a buffalo-gun slug in his abdomen he lay all day quite near the Walls without moving, knowing that should the defenders detect any movement they would finish the job. He was rescued near evening by two mounted warriors, who, riding at full speed, picked him up, laid him across the horse in front of one of the riders, and rode out of range without being hit.

552 Once Charley told me of a service Ca-vo-yo rendered the older
177 Indians who knew no English. I think I remember it almost word for word, and so I will give it as a quotation. "When the white man came to live among the Comanches, here in Comanche land, he brought many things and customs the older Indians had never seen and knew nothing about. The old men went to Ca-vo-yo, and he gave them a Comanche name for each such article and custom. The words he gave them had a particular significance for the article or customs and were easily remembered."

Then Charley gave a little laugh, a sort of chuckle, and went on, "Many old Indians had never seen a completely bald man until they saw your father, so he gave him the name Ka-hait-ze Paph. *Ka-hait-ze* is 'without'; *paph* means 'hair' or 'head.'"

000 I carry three vivid mental images of Ca-vo-yo. One is really a
342 composite image. He lived in a little T-shaped box house that sits on the east bank of West Cache Creek, right where Blue Beaver Creek
609 adds itself to the larger stream. Soon the white people who lived to the east of the creek wanted another ford. They wanted a single ford to take the place of the fords across each creek, a mile upstream. So Ca-vo-yo allowed them to construct a ford just back of his house and only feet below the junction of the two creeks. To use this new ford you had to open and close two gates, as you let yourself through his horse corral.

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726 Indian scouts. The scouts were recruited and commanded by Captain
[657 Richard H. Pratt (the same Captain Pratt who, a few years later,
871] was to organize the Indian school at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and who remained its superintendent for eighteen years, trying to turn Indian youths into imitation white men).

Colonel G. P. Buell advanced from Fort Griffin. Colonel R. S. MacKenzie marched from Fort Concho. Colonel Nelson A. Miles took the field from Fort Supply. Major William Price came eastward from Fort Bascum in New Mexico. Captain Pratt and his scouts, using pack animals to carry supplies, operated at times as a sixth unit.

General Sheridan's idea was to keep the Indians on the move so continuously that their grass-fed horses wouldn't have time to graze, nor would the Indians be able to replenish their commissary from
[136 game. (In 1874 there were buffalo on the high plains, but the white hide-hunters were rapidly bringing about their extinction.) A tracing of the movements of the different Army columns as they pursued the Indians, taken from their reports, shows their trails crossing and recrossing one another, sometimes doubling back, much like lizard tracks in the sand.

There were a number of incidents in which the Army captured numbers of women and children. I have never been able to determine to my own satisfaction which group Wer-que-yah and Peet-so were in. About the only difference it would make would be in the distance they had to walk to reach Fort Sill.

Some Army reports set out the problems incurred when such captures were made. The column had to be regrouped and a force sent back with the captives, sufficient to make sure that they would not escape or be rescued by the Indians. Medical personnel and medical supplies must be part of the returning column. Food must be taken along for both soldiers and prisoners. Wagons must be detached from the main force to haul the food, forage and grain for horses and mules, and such of the prisoners as were unable to walk. This included the wounded, aged, women with newborn babies, and children too young to walk. Wer-que-yah assured us that Peet-so walked the whole distance. There were no roads, no ferries or bridges. Streams must be waded, regardless of the weather or time of year. One thing that should be noted: the Army reports mention wounded women
● [562 in some instances. Many of them fought with their men in the
701] battles.